
CHAPTER 3

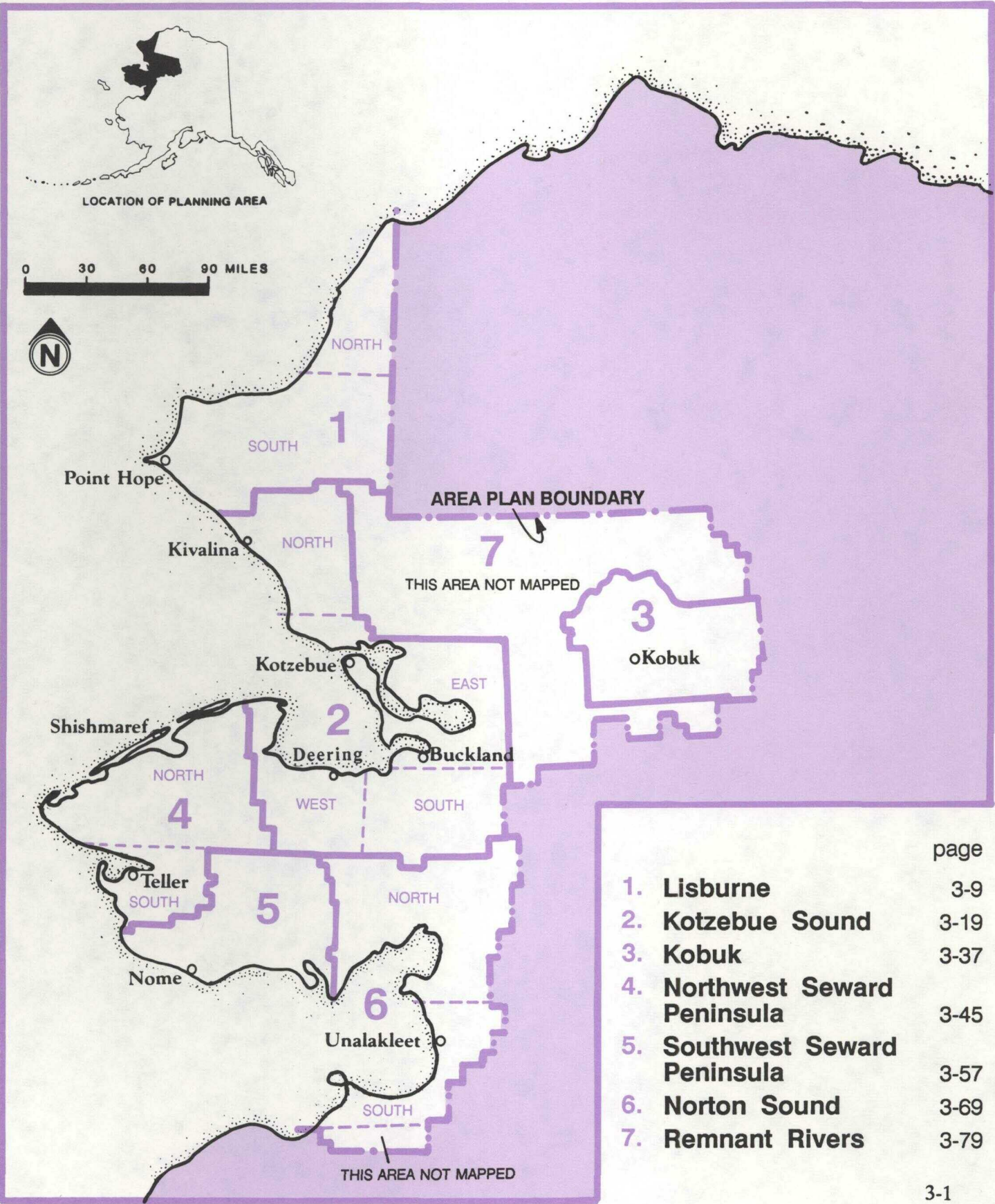
Land Management Policies For Each Managment Unit

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Village of St. Michael

MANAGEMENT UNIT INDEX MAP



Chapter 3

LAND MANAGEMENT POLICIES FOR EACH MANAGEMENT UNIT

Introduction

This chapter presents land management policies for specific sites within the planning area. The area is divided into seven management units by watersheds and socio-political boundaries. The management units are subdivided into subunits that have similar resources, topography, and land ownership. The following land management information is presented for each management unit:

Background - An explanation of the unit's location, land ownership pattern, and special jurisdictions introduces each unit. This section describes the major resources, uses, and communities in the unit, and summarizes access.

Management Intent - A statement of management intent defines near-term and long-term management objectives for the management unit. This section presents a general statement of management intent for the entire management unit, the methods to achieve these objectives, and a list of subunit types found in the management unit. Coastal plans are addressed where appropriate.

Management Guidelines - This section presents management guidelines that apply to certain subunits and to the entire unit. Specific guidelines, such as those for bird rookeries, anadromous stream mouths, land disposals, or remote cabins, are listed by subunit. The areawide management guidelines in Chapter 2 that are most likely to apply to the management unit are identified.

Resource Information Summary - Charts are provided that summarize the resource values in each unit. Special attention should be given to the known cultural resources, important trails, and A1 habitat areas shown on the charts because

particular guidelines in Chapter 2 policies apply to these areas.

Land Use Designation Summary - Charts are included that list primary land use designations, prohibited uses, and subsurface resource management policies for each subunit. These charts provide a quick picture of planned uses within a unit but must be used with the statement of management intent and the management guidelines to get the complete description of management policy.

Map of Land Ownership and Management Unit and Subunit Boundaries - A map of each management unit and the subunits within it is included. The maps show land status, subunit boundaries, and site-specific resources in the unit.

Land Use Designations

The plan presents separate land use designations for surface and subsurface resources. For surface activities, it designates the **primary and secondary land uses** for which each subunit is to be managed. A primary surface use is one that is of major importance in a management unit or subunit. The unit will be managed to encourage this use and its conservation or development. A secondary surface use is permitted within a subunit when it will not adversely affect achieving the objectives of the primary uses. A secondary use may be the main use for a limited area of the subunit.

The plan also identifies **prohibited surface uses** within each subunit. These are activities that will not be permitted within the subunit without a plan amendment. Uses not specifically prohibited may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if DNR determines that the proposed ac-

tivities are consistent with the statement of management intent for the management unit and subunit, and with applicable management guidelines.

Resource designations for "Minerals," "Materials," "Coal," and "Oil and Gas," generally are not applied as primary or secondary surface land use designations. The problems in locating and measuring subsurface resources make it difficult and misleading to apply these categories in the same way they are used for surface resources, such as timber. However, a primary surface designation for minerals or coal is used where intensive mineral exploration or development is currently taking place or is highly likely in the near term (5 to 10 years).

The department's policy for mineral development is shown by the **subsurface designations**, which state whether the subunit is open or closed to new mineral entry. All state land is open for new mineral entry except 13 important seabird rookeries and 7 sheefish spawning sites. Subsurface designations do not affect existing mining claims. All state land is available for coal or oil and gas leasing, except for coal leasing at one seabird rookery. Where a management unit is open to new mineral location and has a primary surface designation, such as wildlife habitat or public recreation, the surface designation will not be construed to prevent mineral development.

Management Intent

General. Almost all state land will be managed for multiple use including hunting, fishing, trapping, recreation, wood-cutting, subsistence activities, access, oil and gas, and mining. Exceptions are the five settlement areas, once the land is actually sold.

Almost all state land is open to mineral entry. Mineral closures will occur only at 7 sheefish spawning sites and at 13 seabird rookeries; coal leasing will not be allowed at one bird rookery.

Uplands along many main rivers in the Northwest Area are in federal, Native, or private ownership. The beds of all navigable rivers and lakes (called "shorelands") are state-owned, except for certain patented mining claims, and are subject to the guidelines in Chapter 2 and to any specific guidelines identified in Chapter 3 for individual

ivers. Where navigable rivers pass through state land, shorelands will be managed consistent with the guidelines in Chapter 3 for the adjacent uplands.

Nine primary land-use designations exist throughout the planning area (see *Subunits and Designations* discussion below). Secondary designations occur for grazing on the Seward Peninsula, recreation where existing use is documented, and forestry where trees exist. Appendix D explains the criteria used for primary and secondary land use designations. Important resource values are highlighted in the resource information summaries for each management unit.

Subunits and Designations. Each management unit contains several subunits. Each subunit fits one of the following nine land-use designations:

- Coal/habitat and harvest lands
- General use tidelands
- General use uplands
- Habitat and harvest/recreation lands
- Habitat and harvest tidelands
- Habitat and harvest uplands
- Minerals/habitat and harvest lands
- Mineral lands
- Settlement

The management intent for these land-use designations is described below, and applies to any subunit with that particular designation. Summary charts of the land-use designations are located with each management unit in this chapter. The general management intent described below and the Chapter 2 management guidelines provide direction for management of the subunits. Additionally, any special guidelines or variations in management intent are described for that subunit in the individual management units in this chapter. Designations for tidelands also apply to the adjoining submerged lands.

- **General Use Tidelands** - Tideland areas often receive significant use and traffic by residents of nearby communities for hunting, fishing, and access to many other activities. These subunits will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use. Management guidelines will be used to protect important coastal fish and wildlife

resources and access to these resources. These coastal areas are generally more suitable for development activities than adjacent habitat and harvest tidelands subunits. These areas will remain open for mineral entry except within one-quarter mile radius of 2 bird rookeries on adjacent state uplands (see Appendix H for further details).

- **General Use Uplands** - These subunits generally have low surface and low subsurface resource values. They are remote and relatively inaccessible areas. Much of this land is used for reindeer grazing and subsistence. This state land will be retained in public ownership, and managed for multiple use. These areas will remain open for mineral entry except within one-quarter mile radius of 3 bird rookeries on adjacent state uplands (see Appendix H for further details). There is no primary resource value on this land.

- **Habitat and Harvest/Recreation Lands** - These subunits have high habitat and harvest value and important recreation and subsistence values. The subunits offer habitat for moose winter range, caribou migration and winter range, waterfowl fall habitat and migration, brown bear, resident and anadromous fish, and sheefish spawning (on the Kobuk River). These subunits also provide the most popular floating and camping rivers in the planning area. These rivers are also important for fishing, hunting, subsistence, and transportation.

The state land in these subunits will be kept in public ownership and managed for multiple use, with emphasis on fish and wildlife habitat and harvest and public recreation, until detailed management recommendations are developed (see Chapter 4, *Recommendations for Further Study*, page 4-7). Several small areas that are the only known sheefish spawning areas in the Kobuk River system will be closed to new mineral entry (see Appendix H for further details). All other state land will remain open to mineral entry.

- **Habitat and Harvest Tidelands** - Habitat values are generally high throughout these subunits. Productive marine mammal areas, seabird rookeries, and anadromous stream

mouths are common. Tideflats, lagoons or inlets, and submerged lands provide important habitat for ducks and geese, herring spawning, overwintering fish, and land mammals. These areas are extensively used for hunting, fishing, subsistence food-gathering, recreation, and access. Cultural resource sites are known to occur, or have a high probability of occurring in these subunits.

The state land in these subunits will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use. Management of these subunits will emphasize the habitat values and human use of the area. These areas will remain open for mineral entry except within one-quarter mile of certain important bird rookeries noted on the management unit maps (see Appendix H for further details). State land authorizations will protect continued public access along the coast.

- **Habitat and Harvest Uplands** - These subunits are comprised of high value habitat lands, which support moose, caribou, anadromous fish, and brown bear. Important reindeer habitat exists on the Seward Peninsula. Waterfowl and shorebirds feed and nest in the associated wetlands of the subunit. Mineral values are variable. Cultural sites are found along rivers. Several trails and access routes exist in these subunits. Trees, important for fuelwood and building materials, are found in these subunits in the eastern part of the Seward Peninsula and along the Kobuk River and its tributaries. Area residents use these subunits extensively for subsistence resource harvest, for access and travel routes, and for recreation; out-of-region residents also use these areas for hunting, fishing, and recreation.

State land in these subunits will be retained in public ownership. Management of these subunits will be for multiple use with emphasis on fish and wildlife habitat and harvest. When permitting activities on state land, guidelines will be used to protect the habitat and continued access to the area. These subunits will remain open to mineral entry except within one-quarter mile of certain important seabird rookeries described in the management units (see Appendix H for further details).

- **Mineral Lands** - These subunits contain high or very high mineral potential and numerous mining claims. These subunits also may be important for subsistence activities. The mineralized areas are under development or are likely to be developed in the near term (5 to 10 years). The subsurface values are primarily for placer gold at several locations on the Seward Peninsula, and for copper, gold, and silver in the eastern Ambler/Bornite area. Habitat values in these subunits are lower than those in minerals/habitat and harvest subunits, and include moose, brown bear, and caribou habitat.

The state land in these subunits will remain in public ownership, open to mineral entry, and managed for multiple use, with emphasis on mineral development. Existing public access will be protected when authorizing state land uses.

- **Minerals (or Coal)/Habitat & Harvest Lands**- These subunits contain land with high or very high mineral or coal potential, numerous mining claims, and important wildlife habitat and harvest areas. The mineralized areas are currently under development or are likely to be developed in the near term (5 to 10 years). The subsurface values are primarily for placer gold at several locations on the Seward Peninsula, lead-zinc in the Red Dog area, copper, gold, silver in the Ambler area, and coal on the Lisburne Peninsula and near Chicago Creek on the Seward Peninsula. Important wildlife species usually include caribou, moose, brown bear, ducks, geese, and resident and anadromous fish. Important reindeer habitat is found on the Seward Peninsula. These subunits are accessible by boat, trail, road, or air, and generally are subject to harvest pressure and mining activity. Cultural resource sites in these subunits are often related to historical mining activity.

The management of these subunits will be for multiple use. They will be retained in public ownership and open for mineral entry, except for one seabird rookery (see Appendix H for further details). Management will emphasize mining, and fish and wildlife habitat and harvest. Guidelines in Chapter 2 will be

used to allow potentially conflicting uses to occur compatibly.

- **Settlement** - Settlement subunits have been identified for potential land disposal. They generally have land with scenic values and attractive amenities, such as public and private recreation, personal-use timber, and relatively easy access.

These subunits will be available for disposal of parcels of land into private ownership. State land that is not sold will be managed for multiple use, including forestry, habitat and harvest, and public recreation. These subunits will be closed to new mineral entry prior to disposal of the land. Guidelines in Chapter 2 have been designed to protect other public values and will be implemented through the land disposal process.

Management Guidelines

Except for lands that will be offered for private ownership, almost all state land addressed by this plan will be managed for multiple use. For this reason, the plan establishes management guidelines that will allow various uses to occur without serious conflicts. Management guidelines can direct the timing, amount, or specific location of different activities to make the permitted uses compatible. Additionally, *Coordination and Public Notice* guidelines in Chapter 2 (see page 2-5) encourage community input on proposed activities on state land.

Flexibility of the Plan

The land use designations shown on the following chart and management unit maps are intended to be flexible. Uses not shown may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if DNR determines they are consistent with the statement of management intent for the management unit and subunit and the applicable management guidelines. DNR may make minor boundary adjustments of land use designations shown on the maps in this chapter through on-the-ground implementation activities--for example, site planning for disposals--if the modifications adhere to the management intent for the affected subunits. Similarly, uses not designated in the plan may be

permitted if they are consistent with the management intent. Because it covers such a large area, the plan will not provide individual answers for all the site-specific issues encountered by state land managers. The plan does, however, clarify the general management objectives for the Northwest Area and thereby provides the basis for more informed decisions.

